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ABSTRACT

This collection, which is a product of a 23-day study tour of China, focuses on educational research and changing educational objectives and practices against the background of the changes that have occurred in the country since the Cultural Revolution of 1976. Sheldon Weeks' introduction to the collection explains how the study tour came about, and Philip Kerema presents a chronology of the tour. The following papers are included: "Educational Research in China," by Sheldon Weeks; "Primary Schooling," by John Khambu and David Knox; "Vocationalization of Secondary Education," by Pani Tawaiyole; "Tertiary Education for National Minorities," by Tom Seta; "Non-Formal and Adult Education," by Ephraim Apelis; "Language Use in China," by Willie Jonduo; "Learning from the Environment," by David Knox; and "Problems of Papua New Guinean Students in China," by Philip Kerema. (MN)

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LEARNING FROM CHINA

REPORT OF THE 1987 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY TOUR

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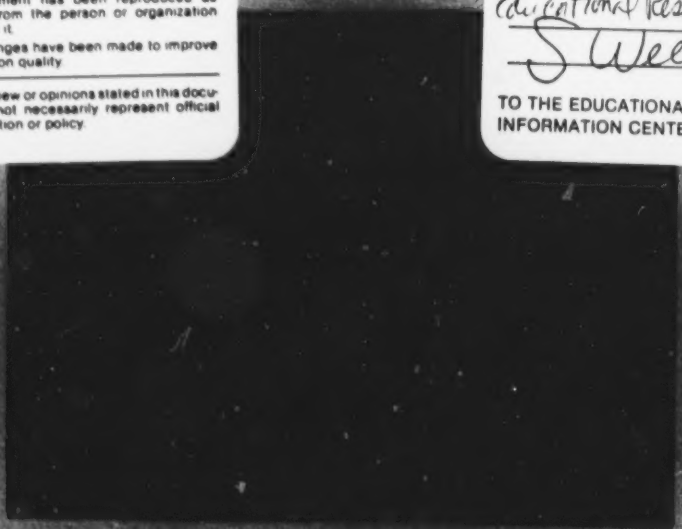

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LEARNING FROM CHINA

THE 1987 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY TOUR TO THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA: June 12 to July 4, 1987.

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We also wish to thank the educational officials in Guangzhou, Yunnan, Beijing and Shanghai who helped to organize our visits in these four places and to the staff and students at the various schools and institutions we visited: the Five Trees, Big Fish and Erliguo Primary Schools; the Chuxiong, Number Two Kunming, the Number 174 Beijing, and the Hua Shan Shanghai Senior Middle Schools; the Yunnan Minorities Institute in Kunming and the Central Institute for Minorities in Beijing; the Yunnan Institute for Educational Research and the National Institute for Educational Research in Beijing (in both Kunming and Beijing we had three separate meetings with staff from these institutes); and those staff involved in Adult Literacy and Education work in Chuxiong and West Mountain District, Yunnan, and Shanghai.

We wish to extend our special thanks to the two guides, friends and interpreters who were with us continuously while in China. Mr Zhu Li, of the Office for Foreign Affairs of NIER met us at Guangzhou and went with us to Yunnan and Beijing. Mr Cui Jiu Ping, also of NIER's Office for Foreign Affairs, met us in Beijing and went with us to Shanghai (but he was unable to go with us on the S.S. **Shanghai**).

We are grateful for the cooperation and assistance rendered by the Office of the Education Department in Guangdong and Yunnan Provinces and the Municipalities in Beijing and

Shanghai cities. Particularly to Ming Chong Liang, the Deputy Director and Zhang Jikang the Director in Yunnan Province; Yang Chong Biao Director of the Education Commission and Deputy Director Luao Jiar Fu for the Chuxiong Autonomous Region and
in Beijing.

We were in Hong Kong from June 12 to 15. We are most appreciative of the assistance provided to us by different people at the University of Hong Kong: Dr Ora Bray who was our initial contact and who arranged for us to stay at Ricci Hall for men and St John's Hall for women. Fr J. Russell at Ricci Hall was most supportive in his arrangements for us.

We had to stop in Manila for one day and two nights on our way back. We had originally planned to arrive in Manila on June 30th and arrangements had been made for us to visit the research programme at INNOTECH in Quezon City (the South East Asia Ministers of Education Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology). Because none of the phones were working at INNOTECH we were unable to contact Dr Delores Hernandez, the new Centre Director, about our change in schedule. Only David Knox was available to make the round trip, on July 3rd, out to Quezon City where he discovered the staff at INNOTECH and the Institute for Science and Maths Education Development had been expecting us for three days and had arranged an extensive progamme for us. We are grateful to Dr. Dolores Hernandez for making these arrangements for us and regret that our delay in leaving China made it impossible for us to participate in the programme she had arranged.

In Papua New Guinea we wish to thank those members of the university who backed our study tour within the Faculty of Education. Particular appreciation is extended to John Lynch, Vice Chancellor, UPNG, who granted us official duty leave for the duration of the tour. Many repeated promises from a local politician and businessman that he would contribute the full cost of the round-trip air fares to Hong Kong came to nothing. This left participants scrambling at the last minute to borrow money from a variety of sources.

This report has been written on the slow boat from China

and typed at the University of Papua New Guinea by Daphne Numuralai, Elizabeth Morove and Dorothy Mokis. It has been printed by the University of Papua New Guinea printery. We wish to thank these people for their assistance. The photographs are by Sheldon Weeks.

We wish also to thank our families, friends and co-workers who tolerated our absence for three weeks.

Ephraim Apelis
Philip Kerema
David Knox
Pani Tawiyole
Willie Jonduo
John Khambu
Tom Seta
Sheldon Weeks

Marlboro

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Sheldon G. Weeks

Staff at the Educational Research Unit, UPNG, began talking in 1984, about organizing a study tour to look at educational research in the nation with 20% of the world's people (we in Papua New Guinea have 0.06%). In August, 1985 we exchanged publications with the China Central Institute for Educational Research (now NIER). In September, 1985, Mr Wu Wei, Director of NIER, invited the Educational Research Unit to send a delegation to Beijing in May 1986. There were delays in gaining approval and endorsement of our study tour by the China State Commission for Education. Word of this approval came in July 1986. Plans were then made for a visit in May 1987.

We wrote to Mr Wu Wei,'We would be particularly interested in spending sometime with staff in Provincial Education Research Offices who have been involved in evaluating literacy programmes, the organization and management of schools, the relevance of vocational education, and the evaluation of pilot projects or small scale educational innovations.' We indicated a preference for spending most of our time in Yunnan. Yunnan is a province in South West China, north of Burma and Viet Nam, with 34 million people, and a centrally located capital at Kunming with 2.2 million. Ten million of the people in Yunnan belong to 24 different 'Minority Nationalities'.

By February 1987 plans had changed slightly to favour June for the study tour. It was arranged to begin the programme in Guangzhou and finish in Shanghai. The China State Commission for Education agreed to pay all the expenses of eight educational researchers (air fares within China, hotels, food and all internal travel costs in the five places

to be visited). Participants had to raise their own fares to Hong Kong and back, pay for the train to Guangzhou and the boat from Shanghai, and cover their expenses in Manila. The eight participants included six from the ERU, one from the Research and Evaluation Unit in the Ministry of Education, and one from the Department of Education, UPNG (a teacher of comparative education).

Sheldon Weeks had been in China for three weeks in April-May 1976, during the time of public castigation of Deng Xiaoping, at the end of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution just before Mao Zedong died. That delegation had included sixteen people and focused on 'decision making' in educational institutions, factories, communes, hospitals, and district and provincial headquarters. At least five articles were published by participants following this visit. He was therefore familiar with the procedures used in China to deal with official delegations. The 1987 Educational Research Study Tour to China took a series of gifts to be presented to each institution visited. We also agreed to rotate leadership between the eight of us, changing each day, even for those days which included only sightseeing or on the boat from Shanghai to Hong Kong when we were writing our reports. This worked well and was acceptable to our Chinese hosts.

China has changed tremendously since the end of the Cultural Revolution in late 1976 and the start of the 'Open Door Policy' in 1979. There is an eagerness to make contacts with people from other countries (and to gain help in learning English). It is easy to make informal contacts with people of all walks of life. Ten years ago foreign groups were subject to being surrounded by hundreds of curious people who stared at them - this has largely vanished, though the curiosity of children was there, and one participant experienced a racial slur. Previously visitors were overwhelmed by noise and spitting. The pervasive slogans on walls and blaring loud speakers are gone. The noise level was down and the campaign against spitting appears to be succeeding, but the more recent campaign against smoking has a long way to go. Air pollution in large cities is a major problem, with the burning of coal being very widespread. The

informal sector is booming. In Shanghai newspaper accounts admitted to half a million unemployed and 80,000 unlicensed traders (the numbers are perhaps even higher). There was some reaction from participants that perhaps the door had been opened too wide 'Rambo' with Chinese titles was screened in Shanghai and songs like 'YMCA' were being played on the radio.

Coming from a nation's capital with 150,000 people we found Kunming, a city of 2.2 million a challenge, and could walk half-way across it in an hour. Beijing with 9 million and Shanghai with 12 million were overwhelming. We felt we should have had even more time in Yunnan and been able to go further west from Chuxiong for a few days to places like Dali and Lijiang, where we would have found a National Minority in the 'majority' - the one million Bai and quarter million Naxi. Perhaps the highlights of the trip occurred during the days we were out of Kunming to Five Trees Village (near the Stone Forest) where we staged an unplanned visit to a village, school and the Yi Minority and then to Chuxiong, 200 km along the old 'Burma Road' where we visited an Autonomous District (but with the 2.2 million people mixed between the majority Han, the Yi, Bai, Miao, Dong and Muslims).

It was an extremely tight schedule (see Chapter 2) but only three days (including two Sundays when institutions are closed) were set aside completely for sight seeing: one in Kunming when we visited temples; one in Beijing when we went to the Great Wall and the Ming Tombs; and one in Shanghai when we went to the Yuyuan Garden and for a four hour cruise on the river.

Because of the time constraints there was much that we were interested in that we never saw or made contact with. While tourists and other visitors even complained of too many visits to preschools we were unable to fit such a contact in. Even though we constantly expressed interest in seeing a programme in a school that involved students learning through productive work, we never were able to do so. Our impression was that perhaps too much of a good thing (a few hours a week of self-reliance) had been thrown out with

the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution bath water! Though China has 20% of the world's people on 7% of the land (and in China the 6.8% National Minorities occupy 60% of the land) we were not able to learn from any agricultural education projects as time and prior planning simply did not permit. Though we visited a number of senior middle schools (equivalent to national high schools in Papua New Guinea) we did not visit any junior middle schools (Grades 7 to 9). The only trade training we saw was in typing, computer operation and architectural drawing.

When Sheldon Weeks was in China in 1976 two dates were foremost: 1949 or Liberation and 1966, the start of the Cultural Revolution. In 1987 most things seemed to date from 1977, the end of the Cultural Revolution and 1979, the start of the 'open door policy'. Between 1966 and 1976 the educational system in China was devastated. While primary and jounor middle schools appear to have functioned, senior middle schools and most tertiary institutions were closed. Educational research came to a standstill and psychology and sociology were banned subjects. Since 1979 China has been rebuilding its tertiary system. It now has a hundred key universities and over 1000 others with one and a half million students. The staff:student ratio across the tertiary sector is one to five.

The pendulum has now swung so far that productive work by students in class time had been abandoned in all the institutions we visited. Private educational institutions and private study are now encouraged. Examples of peasant families earning Y10,000 in a year are publicized in newspapers and on television as models for emulation (the average annual wage is Y720. Four renmimbi equal one kina). Individual initiative and material incentives are prominent as China develops 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. Whereas before education was to help people to 'serve the people' it is now directed towards the 'Four Modernizations' of agriculture, industry, science and technology and defence. Examinations have been firmly reinstated (though in 1988 they plan to reduce the number of examinable subjects for university entrance from seven or eight to three).

We did learn a great deal about China, something about education, and a little about educational research in China. We have established contacts with NIER and with educational researchers in Yunnan and Beijing. The ERU and NIER both hope to continue to develop these contacts.

Chapter 2

CHRONOLOGY OF STUDY TOUR

Philip Kerema

12.06.87 - Left Port at 10:00am by Air Niugini to Manila, then Hong Kong. Checked in at Ricci Hall, University of Hong Kong at about 8:00pm.

13.06.97 to 14.06.87 - Toured Hong Kong, collected tourist's guides to China, bought film, made travel arrangements, reading and getting ready for the China trip.

15.06.87 - At 10:30am left Hong Kong, for Guangzhou (Canton) by train. On our way to the border, we saw several resettlement areas with 20-40 storey building complexes, with new ones are still going up, in the New Territories.

However, after about 20 minutes train ride northwest from the border, the scenery began to change. We began to see rice fields, blocks of banana gardens, taro planting, fruit trees etc. As far as we could see were farms. Few houses clustered together either at the end or in the middle of the farms. The style of houses was quite different compared to the huge skyscrapers of Hong Kong. Most farm houses along the railway were built with clay bricks and tile roofs.

At 3:30pm we arrived at Guangzhou railway station. There we were met by several officials from the Provincial Education Office and Mr. Zhu Li of the Central Institute for Education Research (NIER), who had flown down from Beijing to be our official guide. They helped us to carry our bags into a 15 seater bus (Russian made). Most of us were so excited to see China as the bus was driven through

parts of Guangzhou to the hotel. There were fewer cars and trucks than the number of vehicles that one would expect to see in a Western city, the size of Guangzhou. Most people were either walking or riding on bycycles on the crowded city streets. We checked into the hotel and at 7:00pm the provincial representatives of the National Commission for Education hosted a banquet at the hotel as a sign of welcome and friendship. We were served with 14 different dishes - all Chinese food, very fresh and delicious. We were also served with Chinese Wine, Millet Cognac and beer and soft drinks (mainly imports from Hong Kong). We all began the process of learning to eat with chopsticks! Afterwards, we were driven around the city for sight seeing, and to a Friendship Store and at 10:00pm back to the hotel.

16.06.87 - On Tuesday morning we left Guangzhou by air to Kunming, Yunnan Province on CAAC flight 3409. It was a two and half hour flight south-west from Guangzhou. The flight was quite smooth and comfortable but we could hardly see anything below the white blanket of clouds. In the plane we were served with sweet biscuits and Chinese tea in soft plastic cups. I asked for coffee but there was none available on the flight - it was time to taste Chinese tea! When we landed at Kunming airport we were met by the officials from the Bureau of Education, Yunnan Province including Deputy Director Ming Chong Liang. We were taken to Green Lake Hotel in a 15 seater bus, where we checked in at 12:30 and had lunch there. After lunch we visited the Yunnan Institute for Minority Nationalities in Kunming, where we had discussions with the Director, Ni Li Li, and Professor Liu Peng-Tao (a Bai). Also we met Professor Zhang Jikong, Director of the Yunnan Education Commission, Han Yuexin, a representative from the Division of Foreign Affairs, Bureau of Education Kunming, Mr. Ming, Deputy Director of the Central Office and Wang Yingxue and Deng Xiao Long of the

Education Division for Adults. The last two were with us throughout our week in Yunnan (though neither could speak English). Mr. Wang was keen to learn about Papua New Guinea.

After the discussions, we were shown a language classroom where we saw the sample of language scripts and other symbols representing each of the 24 minority nationalities in Yunnan Province represented in the school out of the 54 minority nationalities in China. It was noted that the total population of Yunnan province is 34 million and out of these 10 million are minority nationalities. We met a few students and were able to talk to them before we returned to the hotel at 6:30pm and went straight for dinner. The evening was free so we went for walks around the Green Lake Park.

17.06.87 - Early on Wednesday morning we left Kunming to see the famous Stone Forest - a unique and spectacular rock formation in this province which attracts a lot of tourists. On the way to the Stone Forest we could see rice and corn farms on both sides of the road. The road did not seem to have any order of traffic flow, cars and buses were zigzagging, tipper trucks - mostly loaded with coal and timber tooted their horns, our driver was driving fast but he was extra careful. On the road we also saw two-wheel tractors, horses and mules pulling carts loaded with vegetables, coal and even firewood. In some of the road side markets one would guess that there were several thousand people, either selling or buying, mainly food stuff. As we drove further and further away from Kunming city, there was less traffic on the road.

As we had slowly ascended, the soil on the roadside began to change from fertile (dark) to poor (red clay), almost unsuitable for cultivation but Chinese know how to make use of it. They make terraces on hillsides, mainly for rice growing.

We also saw men and women building roads and bridges using picks, shovels and crowbars. At about 11:30 am we arrived at the small rural town of Shilin (Stone Forest). There in the town centre, women and children were selling bags, jewellery, hand woven clothes, film etc. At the back of the centre we visited part of the Stone Forest and then had lunch at the hotel.

After lunch we visited the Five Trees Village and the village primary school. In the village, before the school on the hills we saw houses clustered together. They keep goats, horses, pigs and dogs in the village. One women took us to her house. The house, with a high second storey loft, had a small kitchen, two bedrooms and an earth floor living room. At the school it was during the lunch break and teachers were out for lunch. We saw saw children in three classrooms doing supervised work, later had informal discussions with staff and students and returned to the main road. We then went into another part of Stone Forest. On the way we saw women selling photographs, bags, film etc. Several men had horses and camels for tourists to climb on at the back to get pictures. The owner of the animal collects Y2.00 for taking photographs while sitting on the back of the animal. The Stone Forest looks like a forest but unlike a real wood forest, what we could see were thousands of very sharp and tall rocks. We climbed up to the look out through the Stone Forest and then returned to the town centre. By then it was already 3:15pm and we were on our way back to Kunming - a three hour bus drive of 132 km. On the way back we saw a band (pipes and drums) and people singing in a village beside the highway. We did not know what was going on but Zhu Li, our guide, told us that somebody must have died in the village. The band was part of the funeral procession.

By 6:30pm we were back in the hotel. That even-

ing, the Yunnan Provincial Education Commission hosted a banquet. The officials who were present at this banquet were the Director, Zhang Jikang, and Prof Chun Lu head of the Yunnan Institute for Educational Research. Every province has its own specialities. There were more than 12 dishes, ranging from vegetables, fish, meat, mushrooms, soup and ending with the famous 'across-the-bridge noodles'. The hospitality in Yunnan Province was very good.

18.06.87 - On Thursday we left Kunming by bus for Chuxiong, headquarters of an autonomous district in Yunnan Province, 200 km away from Kunming. We arrived at Chuxiong at 12:30, met by education officials and had lunch at the hotel. At 2:00pm visited the National Minorities Senior Middle School, had discussions with district education officials, the principal and staff of the school, observed several classes, visited student dormitories and the deputy principal's flat. At 5:00pm visited an adult education centre near the National Minorities Senior Middle schools, observed some classes as well as recreation and teaching facilities and displays of photography. After dinner we attended a cultural night where Yi students from the Chuxiong Senior Middle School sang and danced. We presented two items: PNG's national anthem and a Tok Pisin love song.

19.06.87 - Early Friday morning we left Chuxiong by bus for Kunming, arrived at Green Lake Hotel at 12:30, and had lunch. In the afternoon we visited the Big Fish Primary School in Western Kunming, had discussions with the principal and staff, observed a few classes and students danced for us. At 4:30pm we visited the West Mountain District offices, abou 20 km from Kunming - met with staff and educational officials. The evening was free so we divided into small groups to see the city and meet Chinese friends (many wish to try out their English).

20.06.87 - On Saturday we visited No.2 Vocational Middle School in Kunming, had discussion with the principal and staff, observed classes in computer use and typing. We also visited No.3 Technical and Vocational School and saw pre-school student teachers practising dances and preparing art work for an exhibition. In the afternoon we went to the Yunnan Normal University and met with some staff of the Yunnan Institute for Educational Research. We had a brief discussion with the Director, Professor Chun Lu, and then divided into three interest group discussions: vocational education research, adult education and policy and evaluation. At about 6:00 pm we returned to the hotel for dinner and rest. The evening was free for long walks through the city of Kunming.

21.06.87 - All of Sunday was spent on sightseeing, accompanied by several students from Yunnan Normal University to translate and explain for us. We visited the Western Hills where we saw steps carved into the steep rocky mountain, Taoist and Buddhist Temples which contain hundreds of small and some large statues of many figures. Then we returned to the hotel for lunch. In the afternoon we went out to the Bamboo Temple, a Buddhist Temple in the hills of West Mountain outside of Kunming. We then went to the Daguan Park in the South of Kunming City. After dinner we had a final meeting with our hosts in Yunnan and saw a video on the province.

22.06.87 - Early Monday morning we left Kunming for Beijing by air, arrived at Beijing airport at 10:30am. At the airport we were met by Mr. Teng, Deputy Director of the National Institute for Educational Research and our new interpreter, Mr. Cui Jui Ping of the NIER Foreign Affairs Office. From there we were taken to Jimen Hotel and had lunch. In the afternoon we went to the Cathay Pacific Office, Friendship Store, and Tian'an Men Square. After

looking around we went back to the hotel and had dinner at 6:30pm.

23.06.87 - On Tuesday morning we visited Vocational Middle School 174 which trains primary school teachers, had discussions with the principal and her deputy, visited classrooms and laboratories, observed piano and painting classes and students (mostly females) sang and danced for us. We then returned to the hotel for lunch. After lunch visited Erliguo Primary school, met by the principal and few of her senior staff, had an introductory session, and half an hour video show on the 30th anniversary of the school in 1985, observed a Grade 2 language (Chinese) class and returned to the hotel. The evening was free. Some of us explored Beijing.

24.06.87 - On Wednesday we visited NIER, met with Mr. Wu Wei the Director of NIER and other staff of the Institute. Had a general discussion and then broke up into three groups (comparative education, vocational education and research and evaluation) for detailed discussions and sharing information and ideas on different fields of interest. At 2:30pm we visited the Central Institute for Minority Nationalities and had discussions with the director and his deputy, visited the language library and in the evening attended a banquet hosted by the Director of NIER and the State Commission for Education, at a Bamboo Restaurant in the centre of Beijing.

25.06.87 - On Thursday we visited Badaling and climbed up the Great Wall of China which covers a total distance of more than 6000 km and enjoys the fame of being one of the oldest (built in 221BC) and greatest ancient architectual projects in human history. Also, visited the Ming Tombs near the Great Wall, had lunch near the Tombs, the Spirit Walk at Shisanling and returned to Jimen Hotel. Vincent Sumale and Tom Aren accompanied us all day (see

Chapter 10). The evening was free for exploring Beijing. A few of us met with Sinclair Solomon of the **Times of Papua New Guinea.**

26.06.87 - Friday morning we went to a Buddhist Temple near our hotel that has a famous collection of prayer bells. At 10:00am Ephraim Apelis, Tom Seta and Sheldon Weeks had final discussions with the NIER Director while Philip Kerema visited two Papua New Guinea students and had discussions with the Divisional Chief of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Beijing Language Institute. After lunch, the whole group visited the Temple of Heaven Tiantan Park and then some of us spent three hours going through the Imperial Palace. Left Beijing on CAAC flight 5104 at 9:00pm for Shanghai by air, landed at Shanghai airport at 10:00pm and we were met by officials of the Shanghai Provincial Education Commission, who took us to the New Garden Hotel near the airport.

27.06.87 - Met the Shanghai Adult Education Officials and staff involved in literacy campaign work for almost two hours of discussions and went for lunch. After lunch, went to the bank to change money and purchased tickets for the boat to Hong Kong.

At 6:00pm attended a banquet on the 17th Floor of Shanghai Mansions hosted by the officials of the Shanghai Education Bureau and at 8:00pm went to the Jazz Bar at the Peace Hotel, then to our hotel at 11:00pm. We were joined in the evening by Jane Sunderland (a former ERU employee now teaching ESL at the former Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute, now International Studies University).

28.06.87 - On Sunday morning we visited the Yuyuan Garden, in the centre of Shanghai - this is a tourist attraction, old buildings, terraces, stone walls, ponds etc. It was built in 1559. Had lunch near the garden, went for 3 1/2 hour boat ride down the

Huangpu River to the delta and back to the city. Went back to the hotel, had dinner and rested.

29.06.87 - Monday morning visited Hua Shan Fine Arts Vocational Middle School, had discussions with the Principal Mr. Zhang Lu and his deputy Mr R. Cheng, (main programmes of this school are design arts, architecture, movie picture, handicraft and teacher training). After lunch, boarded the S.S. **Shanghai**, at 3:00pm left Shanghai harbour down the Huangpu river towards the ocean, heading for Hong Kong.

30.06.87 to 01.07.87 - From Monday evening to Thursday morning we were on the **Shanghai**. The sea was calm, we read, ate, drank, started on the report writing, rested etc.

02.07.87 - On Thursday 8:00am arrived in Hong Kong, stayed two hours on the ship for customs clearance, a smaller boat took us to shore, went straight to the airport by taxi, checked in baggage, had three hours looking around Hong Kong and left for Manila at 4:32pm by Cathay Pacific. Arrived at 6:30pm in Manila, went to Mirador Hotel by taxi.

03.07.87 - Attempts to contact Director Delores Hernandez at the Seameo Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology failed because the phone in the Centre was out of order. Rest of the day was spent on resting and looking around. David Knox went on a long Jeepney ride to the University of the Philippines and INNOTECH and saw the director and other staff.

04.07.87 - At 6:00am checked in at Manila airport, left Manila at 7:00am by Air Niugini, arrived at Jackson airport at 2:00pm local time.

Chapter 3

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN CHINA

Sheldon G. Weeks

Introduction

Between visiting educational institutions and limited sightseeing we were provided with opportunities to meet educational researchers in China. The language problem was a major barrier between us and them as where contact was made they often did not speak English and none of our delegation spoke Mandarin. Only at the frequent evening banquets and the two half days of meetings with educational researchers when we divided into small groups, did we have sufficient time to allow for prolonged translation and an exchange of any depth. While both the Yunnan Institute for Minority Nationals and the Central Institute for National Minorities in Beijing have a number of research institutes we did not meet any educational researchers from these two tertiary institutions. Our first contact with an educational researcher was at the banquet given in our honour in Kunming by the Yunnan Department of Education where the head of educational research in the province, Professor Lu Chun from Yunnan Normal University, was present. We were able to have extensive discussions with him then and again three days later at the Normal University (university level teacher training college).

Professor Lu had studied under Piaget in Switzerland in the late 1940s. In 1979 he was able to resume his cognitive cross-cultural studies in Kunming. Small samples of children have been tested on Piaget's items of conservation in Kunming, and among the Jinuo, Bai, Naxi, Mosuo, Dai, Yi, and Han Nationalities in various locations in the province. His colleague is Professor Zuo Menglan. In 1987 they have a number of graduate students assisting them with their research on cross-cultural studies on cognitive development of children. The Yunnan Institute of Educational Research consists of

these two professors, two Associate Professors and 20 research fellows. As Mr Zhang, the provincial director of education had once been Professor Lu's student there is no communication problem between them. Mr Zhang compared it to 'One hundred flowers blooming' - they made recommendations and the commission of education selects what is best for policy. The YIER both writes reports for academic journals and submits applied papers to the bureau of education. The YIER may investigate 'items of their own interest' and receives orders from above as to what research they should conduct. They said this divided 50 - 50.

In Beijing we had three contacts with staff from the National Institute for Educational Research: at their large building at 10 Beihuanxilu for a morning where we had a main session and then divided into three small groups, that evening when they honoured us with an official banquet. On the day we left Beijing Apolis, Sata and Weeks had a special meeting with Mr Wu Wei, the Director of NIER, to discuss future contacts and exchanges.

Discussions in Chuxiong

In Chuxiong at the first formal session at the Chuxiong Minority Nationalities Senior Middle School a number of representatives from the Autonomous Region were present to brief us including their Director of Educational Research, but we failed to make contact or have any discussions with him. At the official banquet that evening we did discuss educational research with the Director of the Middle School, Ye Jiar Shong. He had devoted the previous nine years to educational research in Chuxiong. During this time he had completed surveys of the educational institutions in the Autonomous Region, a study of the effect of social conditions on students, an economic investigation of manpower needs in the region, and a study to assist in the development of characters so that the Yi language could have a written form. His lines of communication to officals in the department of education are good. Results of research are disseminated through their own journal, **Yi Nationality Culture.** He felt his experiences in pre-schools, primary schools and as an educational researcher

placed him in an unique position to be an effective administrator of a senior middle school (equivalent to a national high school in Papua New Guinea).

Mr Ye Jiar Song wanted further educational research carried out at his senior middle school in five areas:

1. Some teachers are unqualified. Research is required to find ways to assist them to better understand their teaching materials.

2. They are trying to shift from rote learning to student-centred learnng and need applied research to help in this direction.

3. Research designed to improve in-service programmes in the school where experienced teachers assist the inexperienced.

4. Internal testing needs to be improved particularly in Chinese language and maths (word recognition, spelling words, counting in Chinese). Materials designed for self-study require improvement.

5. Research to improve educational administration.

Discussions in Kunming

Considerable lip service was paid to educational research in Yunnan. Except for Professor Lu's and Zuo's paper in English prepared for a conference in July 1987 in Japan, we saw no concrete evidence of educational research or its place in the province. Even if we had been shown any material it would have been in Mandarin and meaningless to us (which happened to us in Beijing).

An example of one of the many references to educational research was found in our briefing on the Yunnan Institute for Minority Nationalities. Within the institute is located a Research Centre for Minority Nationalities Higher Education. The purpose of this centre is to study how to run

educational institutions so that they better meet the needs of the Minority Nationalities in the province. The centre reports to the party secretary, and recommends reforms based on their research. The administration can consider their advice. These three educational researchers were absent from our first meeting in Kunming and we were unable to meet with them later.

In these and other contacts the theme of trying to make up for time lost during the Cultural Revolution was present. Research tended to be practical and focus on ways fpr students to improve their learning and teachers their teaching. The YINM had been closed during the Cultural Revolution and the first senior member of a minority nationality that we met, Liu Peng-Tao (a Bai) had taught in a middle school during those turbulent years.

At the Big Fish Primary School, outside Kunming, when we asked about educational research the principal told us that each member of staff (they had 30 teachers, 5 of whom were female) 'must have an experimental product' and report on it each term. It appeared these tended to be small experiments related to their teaching: eg. an experiment in the recognition of Chinese words. This line of questioning was not pursued further at any other educational institution visited.

The afternoon meeting with educational researchers of the Yunnan Institute for Educational Research (YIER) at the Yunnan Normal University included Professor Lu and Zuo and their graduate students who spoke English, Mr Nimi and Lo Jun. We divided into three groups: Seta and Weeks on educational research; Kerema, Knox and Tawaiyole on vocationalization of secondary schooling; and Apelis, Jonduo and Khambu on adult education.

The YIER was established in 1979. Of the 24 staff all are full-time researchers and belong to the Han majority. The YIER has three divisions: research in educational psychology; primary and secondary schooling; and Minority Nationalities education. Since starting they have published about 50 articles, papers and research reports. They have concentrated on cross-cultural research with some of the 24

Minority Nationalities in Yunnan to compare different groups to Piaget's findings in Europe. The results parallel such research in Papua New Guinea: children of Minority Nationalities are 'behind' the majority nationality, but they eventually 'catch up.'

Yunnan is classified as a 'backward area' in China - the other categories used are 'semi-developed' and 'developed'. We had the impression that educational research in the form of problem solving had a high priority in the province. As an underdeveloped province they share with Papua New Guinea many similar problems: parents not sending their children to school, children dropping out during the first cycle of schooling, under-enrolment of girls and girls not going on to further training, etc. When we explained that Papua New Guinea had over 700 languages for 3.5 million people our hosts were the ones who were overwhelmed. The official line in China is that Minority Nationalities' children learn to read and write in their own language before learning Chinese. We learned that for most language groups this is not so. In Yunnan only five of 25 languages are used in schools, and many have no modern orthography. This is an area the Chinese have neglected that demands research and development. Mandarin appears to have been emphasized as part of their efforts since 1949 to build one China. We seemed to have touched a sensitive 'nerve' through our questions on language policy. They in turn were very interested to learn from what we have accomplished in Papua New Guinea. We were told of one educational researcher, Chang Yinbour, of the Bai Nationality, who at Dali was experimenting with vernacular education and lengthening the number of years of primary schooling in an effort to help raise the standard achieved by the pupils before going on to middle school.

Under the most recent educational reform education is to be made available for all children for nine years - or 'universalization'. This is a tremendous effort as before 1949 education was only for four years, and after the revolution it was extended to five, and more recently to six. In developed parts of China and some cities this target has already been achieved (and in a few places most children can attain 12 years of education) but in 'backward areas' like

Yunnan there are many obstacles to 'universalization'.

The two groups that met separately to discuss educational research and evaluation as they relate to vocational and adult education did not explore any issues of research but spent their time discussing practical issues concerned with these two types of education (see Chapters 5 and 7).

The sessions on research and evaluation in Yunnan concluded with suggestions for further cooperation and exchanges. We agreed on the following:

1. An exchange of materials, with the ERU sending the YIER copies of our earlier Piaget type research and copies of our research reports on vernacular preschools and adult literacy.

2. That the Apeid/Unesco network be used to sponsor two people from Yunnan to come on an attachment to the ERU with the objective of visitng pre-school and literacy programmes in Oro, North Solomons, Enga and Southern Highlands. This should be planned for 1988.

3. That one or two students from the Yunnan Normal University be sponsored to complete a Masters Degree in Education at UPNG. They would have to be fluent in English before they came.

4. That one staff member of the ERU consider spending a Research Leave attached to the YIER.

In a final session at 8:15pm on Sunday June 21st at the Green Lake Hotel Mr Ming Chong Liang, the Deputy Director of the Office of Education of Yunnan Province, reviewed with us the discussions with the YIER and reiterated and approved the above four points. In addition he was very interested in obtaining assistance to help start evaluation research work in Yunnan at all levels of their educational system - 'This is a new field for us and we want to send scholars to research together.' He wished us to understand that the dis-

cussion we had held the day before with Professor Lu were only preliminary and that the Yunnan Bureau of Education makes the decisions.

Discussions in Beijing

When we arrived in Beijing on Monday June 22, we were met at the airport by Mr Teng Chun the Deputy Director of NIER and our new translator, Mr Cui Jui-ping of the Foreign Affairs Office of NIER.

The NIER is located in north west Beijing in a large building. They have 320 staff of whom 180 are educational researchers; 50 of these are senior researchers while 130 are research associates. The NIER is divided into 12 divisions under four deputy directors. They are: educational theory, educational psychology, teaching methodology, history of education, comparative education, educational administration and management, higher education, vocational/technical education, adult education, early childhood education, educational technology, educational information, and a division for publications. They also publish a journal **Educational Research** (in Chinese), have a technology service which produces audio-visual materials and their own library with one quarter of a million books (organized into Chinese, Russian, other languages). In 1982 NIER joined Apeid/Unesco (the ERU had joined in 1979). They have had formal exchanges with educational research institutes in Australia, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Sweden, USSR and USA. We were their first link with a Third World nation.

At our first formal session with staff at NIER we were welcomed by the Deputy Director, Teng Chun and the heads of four of the twelve divisions. NIER is responsible for organizing all educational research in China. All provinces have an institute of educational research (with the exception of Tibet). There are also educational research units in some municipalities and in over 1000 universities. They are now in the middle of their Seventh Five Year Plan. They are working on projects as part of this five year plan and concerned with the most recent major educational reform - the

universalization and vocationalization of schooling.

We divided fairly quickly following the formal welcomes into three small groups: vocational education with David Knox and Pani Tawaiyole; comparative education with Philip Kerema, Willie Jonduo and Ephraim Apelis; and evaluation with John Khambu, Tom Seta and Sheldon weeks.

The group on vocational education met with Ge Jian Ren the Deputy of NIER's Vocational Education Division. The division has twelve research fellows. They have conducted research on inservice training on the job to upgrade present skills; specialized training before people are employed, and how people change jobs and the resulting training requirements. Staff are also interested in vocational training in rural areas, urban areas, vocationalization of secondary schools, higher level vocational education, history of vocational education, and comparative studies of vocational education in other countries.

The second group on comparative education met with Dr Zhou Nan-Zhao, Research Associate in the division of comparative education and its director, Yang Chan. There are 24 full time researchers in this division. They are expected to produce two reports a month on educational systems in other nations. NIER is the only educational research in China institute that has links with other such institutes in other countries. The aim of the division is to understand the Chinese educational system in relation to educational systems elsewhere; to provide policy alternatives to decision makers; to better understand the educational systems in other countries so that China might benefit from this knowledge in her drive towards modernization. To achieve these objectives research so far has been confined to the educational systems of developed nations.

Because China has in the past made mistakes in its relations with other countries it was important now to obtain a balance (not embrace uncritically or reject completely). Because China has been decentralizing its educational system since 1980 research has examined decentralization in other countries. Other themes investigated have been the financing

of education, the place of examinations in selecting students for further study, and how reform in rural and adult education has worked in other nations.

The group on evaluation met with Professor Wang who is the full time coordinator of China's part of the Second International Science Study (SISS). As Papua New Guinea is also participating in this study we were familiar with it. Six people at NIER are involved in the research. They have tested 3036 students in Grade 9 in 114 schools. Some staff have also been studying in Sweden. The Australian Council for Educational Research in Melbourne has also assisted staff from NIER in the analysis of some of the data. We also looked at their computer facilities (three machines in one room, one in another with 20MB and capable of working in Chinese). They use a programme developed in Shanghai called RDAS (Relationship Data Analysis System). The system is used to help them monitor the class background of students in China, process enrolment statistics produced by schools, districts and provinces, study the consequences of selection by examinations. They are also evaluating the implementation of the universalization programme (nine years of education for all) and the reform of secondary schooling. To conclude our visit to CIER we visited their research library and publications office. All publications were in Chinese, but some more recently had been given English titles.

Agreements on Exchanges

On Friday June 26th in the morning Ephraim Apelis, Tom Seta and Sheldon Weeks met with Wu Wei, Cui Jui-ping and Zhou Li at the Jiamen Hotel. We agreed to the following:

1. Exchange of materials

   That NIER and the ERU would continue to exchange materials.

2. Initial visit of a few NIER and Yunnan IER staff to Papua New Guinea

That two or three people would make an initial visit from China to meet people in Port Moresby and learn more at first hand about educational research in Papua New Guinea.

3. Further observation of Minorities Education in China

That two people from Papua New Guinea would be invited back to China for a longer period (than two weeks) to observe more closely minorities' education in Yunnan, Hainan Island, Inner Mongolia, Korean Autonomous Region, Sichuan and Guangxi.

4. Delegation from China to Observe Pre-School and Adult Literacy Programmes in Papua New Guinea

That two or three people from China would visit Papua New Guinea for three or four weeks in 1988 (hopefully under the auspices of Apeid/Unesco) to observe the vernacular pre-school programmes in the North Solomons, Oro and Enga and the adult literacy programmes in Tari.

5. Translation of ERU Publications into Chinese

That Report 55, **Basic Research Techniques**, could be translated into Chinese for use by field workers in China.

6. Endorsement of the Agreements Made in Yunnan with their Institute for Educational Research

In addition to the above these include students from Yunnan studying for their Masters Degree in Education at the University of Papua New Guinea, and staff from the ERU spending a Research Leave in Yunnan (see page 26).

Reference

Zhuo, M. and Lu, J. (1987) 'A Comparative Study of Cognitive Development of Different National Children in Yunnan Province', Conference Paper.

Chapter 4

IMPRESSIONS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN CHINA

John Khambu and David Knox

Introduction

For some time, China has had a policy that all children should receive primary schooling of six years' duration. In 1985 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China decided that universal education should be extended to include junior middle school, as had already been achieved in some districts. However, in areas that had not achieved universal primary education, first priority should go towards achieving this, with six years' primary schooling of reasonable quality, before embarking on the expansion of junior middle school provision.

The major responsibilities for funding education fall with the bureau of education in the provinces and municipalities. These bureaux also produce their own teaching materials and set their own examinations, or can delegate such tasks to their districts.

There are special policies for helping education for minority nationalities, many of whom live in the more backward areas where fewer children attend school and there may be less parental support for formal education. These policies include extra financial assistance for minority nationality children undertaking further studies, eg. for teacher training, so they do not have to contribute so much towards the cost of their senior middle schooling.

In the areas we visited, over 90% of the children of primary school age were enrolled in school, with very little 'dropping out' during primary school, and primary schooling lasted six years. In Chuxiong we were told that in some counties of Chuxiong District primary schooling was still of

only five years' duration.

At the end of primary school children take an examination, set by the districts, in the places we asked about, to decide who can go on to junior middle school; the proportion going on is decided by the number of places available.

Some of the vocational senior middle schools we visited provided teacher training courses for pre- and elementary school teachers. Primary student teachers could specialise in particular fields, eg. Chinese language, mathematics, art, music. We gathered that after the first two years of primary schooling lessons would be taken by teachers who had specialized in those fields. Teaching loads could be about 12 hours in class per week, with teachers having other responsibilities outside the classroom such as visiting parents.

Apart from the teachers, schools also had some ancillary staff. Erliguo school in Beijing, which we visited, had 50 teachers and 22 other staff catering for its 905 pupils.

What We Saw

The party visited three primary schools: Five Trees School near the Stone Forest, Big Fish School near the outskirts of Kunming and Erliguo School in Beijing. The first was an unscheduled visit, and we arrived during the lunch break; the other two were scheduled and activities had been put on for our benefit. In this section we first describe the general features common to all three schools and then comment on particular features of individual schools.

All the school buildings were soundly constructed of permanent materials and the classrooms were well lit. Each school had a surfaced playground with netball stands. The particular schools had small or no gardens; the small garden at Five Trees had a variety of food crops and flowers growing in it. All the schools had generally tidy surroundings, and were connected to a mains electricity supply.

Inside the classrooms, the classes we saw were generally

fairly large (ranging from about 30 to 60) with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. Each child was sitting at a desk; the desks were always in rows facing the front, suggesting that group work was infrequent. There was little other furniture or equipment on view apart from a table and chair for the teacher: Erliguo was better equipped than the other two. Each child had exercise and text books and writing materials (including special brushes and books for calligraphy at Big Fish). There were very few visual aids on the walls, even at Erliguo which, though not a key school was obviously something of a model school; we were told it had more equipment than most schools.

The children looked healthy, clean and tidy in the three schools. Class control seemed generally good. Bells rang to mark the beginning and end of lessons.

At Five Trees we found two classes working unsupervised during the lunch hour, despite very loud music being played over a loudspeaker in the playground. Some boys were playing basket-ball. The children were markedly camera-shy (not the case elsewhere). There were no teachers in the classrooms or on playground duty, which says something for the good behaviour of the children! On the blackboard in one classroom we saw words in pinyin with tone markings and some simple Chinese characters - obviously a class starting to learn the characters having first acquired literacy in pinyin.

Our visit to Big Fish was in the afternoon. Amongst the activities on view was band practice in the fields behind the school, gymnastic exercises to a hefty disco beat, calligraphy, art (still life drawing of a flask and cup on a chair), dramatised story-telling by children and one group of children absorbed in rehearsing a play by themselves.

At Erliguo, where about 90% of the children's parents had highly educated backgrounds, we saw a demonstration lesson (children taking turns to read a traditional story from a book, using dictionaries to look up unfamiliar words and the teacher putting up pictures to illustrate it). This school also had a video, with English commentary, to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the school. We were also told that

the children at Erliguo did homework (20 minutes a day for Grades 3 and 4, increasing up to an hour for Grade 6). Asked what her main problems were, the head teacher there said (as translated), 'Getting the children well educated in a short time'. She told us that by the end of Grade 6 children there could recognise an average of 3,700 characters - the national standard was 3,000.

When we asked at Big Fish and Erliguo about linking of education with productive work, at both schools recent activities had taken the form of community work. At Big Fish the children had volunteered to repair the road leading to the school, while those at Erliguo had donated money and old clothes for good causes such as reconstruction after the recent large fire in North-East China and put on a cultural performance to raise money for conservation of the panda's natural habitat. Before the Cultural Revolution, Big Fish had a substantial school garden, but lost the land while the school was closed during the Cultural Revolution.

Conclusion

We close here with two general comments. Some further more speculative comments on the potential for linking lessons and learning with the environment can be found in Chapter 9 of this report.

The classrooms we saw looked less interesting places than community school classrooms in Papua New Guinea, where it is normal to see visual aids and children's work on display. We suspect that teaching methods are probably more formalistic: teaching methods were mentioned as a problem by several administrators and other officials we spoke to, but we were not able to follow this up. From the little we gathered about the teacher training programmes in the vocational middle schools we visited, we formed the impression that during teacher training more time was devoted to content than to teaching methods.

Being illiterate in Chinese, we were unable to assess the achievement of pupils in China compared to that in Papua

New Guinea. We did, however, collect an interesting comment from one observer in the vocational education field. When we told him that a common problem in Papua New Guinea mathematics lessons in community schools was that although about half the children in the class must understand what was going on, many of the others seemed to have no idea and had been left behind long ago. He told us that this did not seem to be the case in Chinese primary schools, but a similar gap in achievement opened up in the junior secondary schools. We do not know if Chinese schools concentrate more closely on a limited range of mathematical operations, compared to their counterparts in Papua New Guinea.

Chapter 5

VOCATIONALISATION OF CHINA'S SECONDARY EDUCATION

Pani Tawaiyole

Vocationalization and Industrial Modernisation

Vocational or technical training is seen as essential for facilitating economic progress by means of producing the required skilled manpower needs for the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and for the country as a whole. This is in line with China's reconstruction policy referred to in the 'Four Modernisations'. These are the modernisation of agriculture, industry, defence and science and technology. Thus one of the major areas of reform was vocationalisation of secondary education which plays an important role in the economic reform.

China's Education System

Primary schooling is now compulsory for six years for all school age children. Eligible age for entry to primary schools is seven years though some schools may enrol six year olds. In Kunming, District, Yunnan Province, it was estimated that 93.3% of the 7-12 age group are enrolled in primary schools. The retention rate of this age group is 96%. The high enrolment and retention rate at primary schools is a positive indication of achieving universal primary education (UPE) before the year 2,000.

Learning in primary schools aims to promote the four modernisations and the intellectual, physical, moral and aesthetic development of the child. The curriculum includes normal academic subjects like mathematics, Chinese language and art. To further moral and responsible attitude development children are taught to love their country or mother land and pupils are encouraged to give donations. Physical edu-

cation is a must. About a quarter of primary schools in Yunnan have productive units (farms or workshops) attached to the schools. The productive units main functions are to train students to take part in labour activities (including developing a love for labour and training in skills) and to produce things for sale and generate income for the school.

The first three years of secondary schooling are referred to as or junior middle school. Proportions going on to regular junior middle school vary widely from district to district: for example, in Kunming District, Yunnan Province, nearly all can go to junior middle school, in some other more remote districts very few primary school leavers go on to middle schools. Those who cannot get junior middle school places can go to elementary technical and vocational schools and then join a work unit.

The junior middle schools have a common curriculum. Like the primary schools some junior middle schools have their own farms and factories attached to schools and students participate in productive work. The State Education Commission in Beijing sets guidelines for the amounts of time spent in productive work. For junior middle schools, a total of 144 hours in the three years (not more than four periods per week, or two months full time in one year). Within these limits each school can arrange the time according to its own circumstances.

The last three years of secondary schooling take place in the senior middle schools. There are two types of senior secondary or senior middle schools: the regular middle schools and the specialized technical and vocational middle schools.

At the end of 1985, about 60% of pupils enroled in senior middle schools attended regular senior middle schools. They follow a core curriculum with equal emphasis given to arts and science subjects. The subjects include English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history and geography. Graduates of these schools normally (since 1977) sit the Unified Higher Education Entrance Examinations. Nationally about 7% of these graduates are admitted by universities and

higher institutions (Cheng 1986:4). These general or regular senior secondary schools are run by educational bureaux in local governments.

The secondary specialized schools on the other hand are normally run by non-educational bureau in local governments. They focus attention on technical and vocational or occupational training. They are designed to train and supply intermediate manpower (technicians). The strategy used when designing specialized vocational courses is: 1, get the manpower requirements; 2, run the course for 4-5 years; and 3, revise the course for new needs. Graduates of these specialized schools, after a certain period of work, may apply for entrance to higher specialized institutions at university level (Cheng 1986:5). Government policy specifies that middle school students who have not participated in labour activities cannot go on to further studies. Students at technical and vocational schools who fail the exam cannot be employed as technicians (salary Y30 to Y40 per month).

In the Yunnan Province, about 550 regular middle schools (out of 1,825) have their own farms, another 300 or so have their own factories. Over 90% of technical and vocational middle schools have their own farms or factories. Before the Cultural Revolution, all regular middle schools had their own farms and factories. Income from production activities is about Y6,060,000 each year of which Y3,048,000 is used to help the running of schools while some of it is used to improve teachers' conditions. Students are not allowed to keep the profits from their labour. A total of 243 hours in three years is spent on productive activities at the senior middle school level.

Vocational schools in the country side train students to go back to their home areas to develop industry and the economy there. Local factories and government can choose from these students for occupations using new agricultural technologies. Such students have a liitle chance of getting work in the cities. The subjects taught depend on the situation in the districts and can include embroidery and fruit tree horticulture to tea growing.

Visits of the PNG Education Delegation to Selected Vocational Senior Middle Schools

The following regular and specialized vocational middle schools were visited: Chuxiong Senior Middle School for the minority nationalities; Kunming specialized Secondary Vocational School Number 2; Beijing Vocational School 174 and Hua Shan Fine Arts Vocational School in Shanghai. Below is a brief description of each of these schools.

Chuxiong Senior Middle School

This school is situated in the capital of Chuxiong County, (an autonomous region) lying 200 km west of Kunming. Chuxiong has a population of about 2.2 million, consisting mainly of the majority Han people and the Yi, Miao, Dai, Bai and Moslem Minority Nationalities, including 30,000 Miao and 520,000 Yi. Chuxiong country covers an area of about 8,000 square kilometres.

Chuxiong senior middle school is a general or regular secondary school which teaches mainly academic subjects. It has a student population of 409 students. There were 16 teachers and 14 ancillary staff. The educational qualifications of the teachers are as follows: 12 have university level education, two are teachers' college graduates and two are senior middle school graduates. Each teacher has 12 one hour classes per week while the rest of their time is spent in lesson preparation, political work and contacts or communications with the parents of students. For example, teachers visit parents regularly to discuss their children's academic progress.

Several of the third year students I met and spoke to said they are very proud of their school and expressed a strong desire to continue their education at an institute or university. Both the males and the females said they were very interested in learning English and one girl said she would pursue a course in foreign languages when she graduates from Chuxiong Senior Middle School.

It is a boarding school - the students' residential hall stands high facing the teachers' quarters. Both residential buildings are separated from the main classroom and administrative building by a basketball court. In the two girls' rooms that I was taken to eight girls shared the double-bunk beds that stood against each side of the room, leaving just enough space in the middle for the girls to move in and out.

The number of girls as opposed to boys was not given but from observation of two third year classes I found that about 30% to 40% were girls.

Kunming specialized Secondary Vocational School Number Two

This school was established in 1908 as a Women's Teachers' Training College. In 1983, it was converted to a vocational school and began enrolling boys. It's aim is to train senior technicians and cadres. There were about 1,200 students of which 50% were females. The 108 staff included directors and full-time and part-time teachers.

The following courses are currently being taught at the school: computer science; secretarial (typing in English and Chinese). Another course which has been stopped temporarily but will resume next term is electricity or training of electricians (linesman). Other courses that the school has conducted in the past include finance and banking, librarian, furniture making and mechanic (machinery repair). All the courses are of three years duration and apart form attending courses at the school students go out to prospective employers (factories and other business enterprises) for six months to one year practical, on the job training.

The students that are recruited to undertake training must be graduates from junior middle schools or better (from regular senior middle schools).

How courses are organised was not clear but it appears that students doing the secretarial course do two terms or one year of typing in Chinese, another two terms in English typing and do basic computer training during their third

year.

Students must pass the course requirements as well as the higher education examinations set by the State Education Commission in Beijing in order to be awarded a secondary schooc certificate. Without this certificate they will not be allowed to be employed.

Beijing Vocational School 174

This school was established in 1959 as a regular secondary school. In 1984 it was converted to a teacher training college. The school trains pre-school teachers (mainly females); art teachers for primary schools (some males but mostly females) and Chinese language and mathematics teachers. At present there are 751 students of which 651 are females and 100 males. The school employs a total of 110 staff of which 60 are full-time teachers and 10 part-time teachers.

The students must have completed nine years of education (primary and junior secondary) before they are selected to attend this vocational school. At the time of enrolment they are given an entry examination and only those that pass are allowed to remain and attend teacher training courses. The school is a day school though boarding facilities exist at the school and at present about 30 students (females) from suburban areas are boarding. Their boarding expense are paid by the municipal government bureau. The subjects taught in the three main specialities are as follows:

1. pre-school teacher training students learn Chinese language and art; politics; geography and history and mathematics;

2. primary school teacher training students learn education psychology and pedagogy (teaching methods);

3. music and art and fine arts are part of the curriculum for both types of teachers. In music

students learn to play piano (about 67 pianos); organ (53); accordion (150); violin (15) and chorus (choir). In fine arts, students learn Chinese coloring and painting and crafts. They also have gymnastics and acrobatic type lessons.

Like any other teacher training program this school allows for practice teaching. The first and second years have one to two weeks practice teaching per semester. The third year have one month per semester.

The school has a plant for making soap to earn a profit for the school. In the past every student participated in productive work to produce the soap. This was discontinued as of 1984. Today students are not participating in productive work - instead people are hired to run the factory.

The management of the school is the responsibility of the principal assisted by her deputy. For example, the principal decides how many hours teachers must spend on teaching duties. Teachers can be paid more for teaching ten hours or 13 hours if there is a need to teach longer hours. The teachers' qualifications include university graduates, teachers' college graduates plus inservice courses at the municipal government college.

The schools' facilities include 42 store rooms for pianos, gymnastics hall, biology, chemistry and physics laboratories, painting classroom and storerooms.

Hua Shan Fine Arts Vocational School - Shanghai

This school has a student population of 370 of which about 50% are girls. The school has 65 (60%) full-time teachers and 20 part-time teachers and full-time administrators. The teachers of general subjects are those who are full-time teachers at the school. Teachers of specialized trades are part-time teachers who are experts from private organisations who in some cases have sponsored some of the students.

The school offers training in the following specialized fields: design and painting, architecture, production of motion pictures, handcraft, and teacher training.

There appears to be no sex discrimination in the different speciality areas. For example, the proportion of boys to girls taking architecture and production of motion pictures is about 1:1. However, in the teacher training group girls dominate so that the proportion of boys to girls is about 1:2.

Graduates from this school can go on to further tertiary training if their academic performance is high. In the past about 20% to 25% went on to university while another 70% went into direct employment.

Sponsorship of Vocational Students

The most interesting aspect of vocational education in China is their sponsorship scheme and the inter-relationships of the sponsoring agencies, the Shanghai Education Bureau and the Shanghai Manpower Planning (labour) Bureau.

Almost every student attending specialized vocational schools in China is now on sponsorship and is guaranteed employment upon graduation. For example, at all the specialized vocational schools that we visited, there was an indication that over 90% of their graduates were employed. None of them admitted to us any cases of their graduates facing unemployment: all are said to be either employed by their sponsors or are self-employed, or even join the lower grade work units (if they do not pass their course).

The numbers to be trained for the different specialities is determined by the number needed in the field. Each organization, eg. factories, hotel, commercial company, etc carry-out manpower needs assessment and submit to the education bureau through the labour bureau. The education bureau then disseminates the information to the different specialized vocational schools who then recruit the numbers required for each of the different specialist areas. It is not clear who

or how it is co-ordinated at the level of each school.

Every student must sign a contract with the sponsoring agent at the start of their training. This contract gives them a guarantee to a job upon satisfactory completion of their course. Throughout their training students are given practical periods of work at the prospective work places.

Women and Vocational Education

Like anywhere else in the world women in China tend to undertake training in the traditional feminine professions like teaching and nursing. A clear example is the enrolment figures at the Beijing Vocational School 174. Throughout our visits to vocational institutions, when I asked about what courses women students have enroled in, the answer was always the same: mainly in the pre-school, primary school teacher training and nursing and foreign language courses. In the elementary vocational schools women were trained to do embroidery and sewing and to be pre-school teachers.

Apart from training to become teachers and nurses many women have joined other fields like architecture, production of motion pictures and tourism. Out in the rural areas women actively participate in road construction.

Working conditions in terms of salary for women are said to be the same as their male counterparts.

What Have We Learned from China's Vocational Education?

1. That vocationalisation of secondary education has helped to solve China's unemployment problem. The practice of rigid manpower planning and sponsoring has had a significant impact upon structural unemployment.

2. That there is a close link between the education bureau, other organisations and the prospective employers who will absorb the trained manpower produced by the education system. There is a good system of information

exchange between education and other bodies.

3. The specialized vocational schools we visited were once used as regular (academic) senior secondary school and have been converted in the early eighties to specialized (technical) schools. As a result some still lack equipment for the specialized training.

4. Students attending specialized vocational schools know from the beginning that they have a job waiting for them and that they will have to fulfil the contract requirement, that is, to work for the firm which sponsored them. Thus students when they graduate have no choice but to work for that firm. There is little chance for them to transfer from one firm to another.

Summary and Conclusions

Vocational education in China has three main functions:

1. modernization of technology;
2. upgrade the skills in present jobs;
3. specializedd pre-employment training.

There are significant differences in vocational education between urban and rural areas. City or urban vocational education is concentrated in the senior middle school level. In rural areas most attention goes to developing vocational education at the junior middle school level. Course include fruit trees growing.

The three main types of vocational schools are:

1. senior vocational middle school (technical schools);
2. secondary specialized schools;
3. secondary worker's school.

Their objectives are to train middle level managers or technicians.

Text book and syllabuses are provided for general knowledge in vocational education but not for specialized subjects. These later were done by teachers in the schools or

experts from outside like engineers or technicians.

A specialized vocational school cost about twice as much to establish as a regular vocational school. The local area would be asked to contribute as much as possible towards the costs. Proportions varied from city to city but most of the money usually came from government. Some enterprises or combinations of enterprises, run their own vocational schools.

Vocational secondary schools play an important role in the economic reform of China. It provides interesting experiences as it features the steps taken to improve unemployment problems and work towards achieving it's economic goals. It provides us a clear example of 'bottom-up' planning a concept much talked about in PNG but with virtually no result.

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Chapter 6

EDUCATION IN CHINA FROM A GLIMPSE: TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR MINORITY NATIONALITIES

Tom Seta

Introduction

China with over one billion people has 54 distinct Minority Nationalities. These people have very unique cultures and traditions, different from the dominant majority, the Han or Chinese. They have lived in the remote parts of the Country either as slaves, in feudal states or as capitalists up to the 1949 Revolution.

Educational achievements among the minorities have been very low as different groups have lived in different ways before the Liberation in 1949. The revolution has somewhat freed these people and encouraged socialist idealism and construction among them. A member of the Minority Nationalities now live in autonomous regions where they are able to run their own affairs in education, economic and social development.

The Central Government of the Peoples Republic of China is now embarking on universalising education from the pre-primary school level to senior secondary schools so that all children will receive nine years of schooling. There are special policies to promote education for Minority Nationalities.

Yunnan Institute for National Minorities

In the Yunnan Province, there are 34 million people of which 10 million are Minority Nationalities. There are 24 different Minority Nationalities throughout the province, of which the Yi nationality is the largest.

The Yunnan Institute for Minority Nationalities was opened on the 15th of August 1951, with the support from the Central Government. The principles on which the college was founded were equality, unity, and help for each other.

The College has two divisions and nine departments as follows:

A. Divisions

The preparatory course first division is to help Minority Nationality students gain access to higher education. It has two sections:

1) a preparatory section for high-scoring Minority Nationality students to enable them to gain entry to the Yunnan University Medical School;

2) a senior middle school providing classes for pupils leaving junior middle schools in backward areas where there are no senior middle schools.

The second division is for cadre training.

B. Departments

The departments are:

Minority languages and literature
Foreign languages
Chinese language and literature
History
Mathematics
Economics and administration
Physics
Chemistry
Politics and law.

The cadre training courses last for two years, leading to a College certificate. The departments offer courses lasting four years, leading to a University certificate. The college can grant masters' degrees in five disciplines, and at pre-

sent has about 50 masters' students.

At the Yunnan Minorities Institute there are more than 90 Professors and Associate Professors, and over 200 lecturers in the nine departments. There are 2600 full time students and 900 students are taking evening class or through correspondence. It is anticipated that by 1990 the number of students will increase to 3500.

About 1700 foreign scholars visited in the last 7 years, mostly from Europe, some from Asia and Africa, usually to study languages, history, anthropology and ethnography of the Minority Nationalities. The college also has exchanges with universities and colleges in Japan and Thailand, as well as having information and staff exchange agreements with 3 U.S. universities.

At the institute staff members are required to carry out research in their own fields. Research is carried out in primary and secondary schools for the purpose of reform in teaching methodology and teachers' inservice. Other research includes minority culture, history, religion and archaeology, as well as the development of the economy of minority nationalities.

All research carried out serves the purpose of socialist reconstruction and reform of one aspect or another. As equality and unity is the emphasis in education all research also is interlinked with this ideal.

The Central Minority College - Beijing

The Central Minorities Institute was established under its present name on 11th. June, 1951. This college enrols students from Minority Nationalities from all parts of China. The prime purpose of the college was to train cadres for minorities after the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China.

The College has seventeen major departments and five small institutes. Subject departments are: philosophy, law,

economics, Chinese language, three departments for minority nationality languages, music, foreign arts, anthropology, foreign languages, physics, mathematics and biochemistry. Other departments are: cadre training, graduate school, and spare time university. There are five small institutes for anthropology, minority languages, minority literature, Tibetan studies, and economics.

There are altogether 8,600 students at the Central Institute for Minorities of whom 3,600 are full-time students pursuing higher education while 5,400 are studying during their spare time. There are 45 professors, 276 associate professors, and over 500 lecturers.

The college has students from a number of countries, such as the United States, Australia, Italy and Japan, studying Minority Nationalities language, literature and history. There are also academic exchanges with other countries.

The Central Minority College Library has a collection of over one million books: 80% of these books are in Chinese, 15% in foreign languages and only 5% in minority languages. When we asked why so few books were in minority languages, it was explained that (a) Minority Nationalities constituted only 6.7% of the population, (b) more than half the minority languages lacked a standard orthography - research was being done to overcome this problem - and (c) some minority nationality regions did not have their own publishing houses.

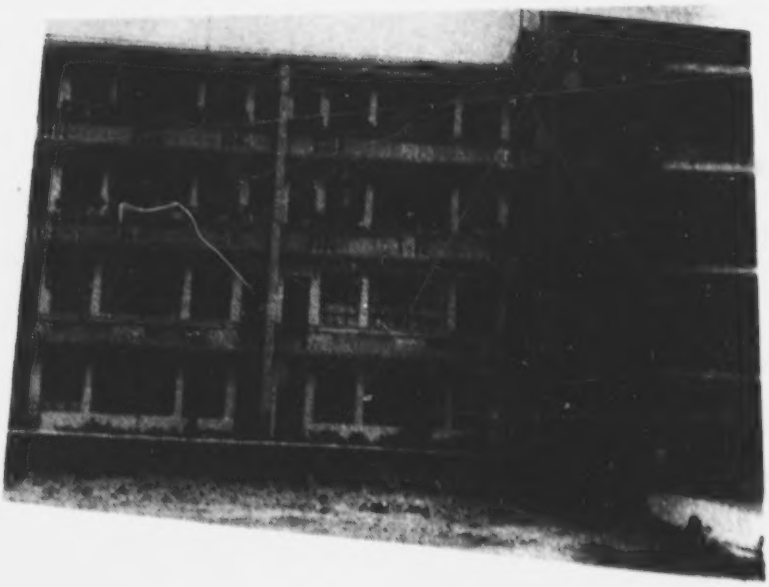
Students from 54 Minority Nationalities live and study together at the college. More than 80 different languages are spoken by the students.

The Central Government encourages every minority to learn their own language as well as Chinese. Many Minority Nationality students, however want to learn Chinese in order to take up courses in science and technology.

Every staff member does research in their own fields as required. Usually they carry out applied research. Other research projects are carried out by the National Academy of

Social Sciences.

Research into the minority languages is very important because it will help students to learn to read and write in their own language. As the college is for the Minority Nationalities it is also important that more books are produced in the minority languages. A lot of the unique cultures and traditions of the Minority Nationalities will be lost if not preserved in libraries in Minority Institutes.



Chapter 7

NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION - LITERACY CAMPAIGNS

Ephraim Apelis

Introduction

The scope of the Chinese non-formal adult education system ranges from basic literacy to university level education. It caters for the learning needs of simple peasant farmers to middle and top level executive workers. It was estimated that there were some 7.5 million adults attending part time primary classes which were heavily dominated by learning literacy and numeracy skills (Cleverley 1985). The domination of literacy involvement is because of the high number of illiterates 235.8 million. China like other countries in the region plans to achieve 100% literacy by year 2000. While the proportion of illiterates in China has dropped, the gross figure is still very high. It will certainly need a great deal of collective effort from all sectors of the society to be able to achieve its goals.

Basic literacy in China means knowing and being able to recognize at least 1500 Chinese characters: this enables one to use a dictionary. Knowledge of 3000 characters is needed to read a newspaper easily. According to Cleverley (1985), the illiteracy rate for urban populations at 16% was less than that in the countryside at 34%. The most striking figure was the high illiteracy rate among women. Of all illiterates 70% were women. The illiteracy rate among workers fell from 20.7% in 1957 to 1.6% in 1982. Most illiterates in China are rural peasants. China aims at achieving a functionally literate society which in turn should be able to support the continual existence of its over one billion people.

China continues to maintain its high level of discipline in all places of work, school and at home - the people have

been made to realise for their continual survival that nothing comes without hard work. This particular ideology set the basis for the recent expansion and full adoption of many nonformal adult education programs which have been part and parcel of the overall development package. The most successful component has been functional literacy and numeracy programs integrated into other grassroot and urban oriented developmental projects. The objective has been to achieve a functionally literate society that is able to cater for all possible needs of its members. Both formal and non formal education systems are seen as important in achieving this goal.

In this chapter I will give a brief description of visits made to three provincial adult education institutions. The visits were very short and what is stated here comes from discussions held with nonformal adult education officials from the visited centres and provincial bureau of adult education staff in Yunnan Province and Shanghai Municipality. The actual observations were limited due to shortage of time. It would have been a very interesting experience to have observed more adult classes and activities outside the classroom.

Literacy Institutions Visited

Three visits were made to provincial literacy institutions. These were: Tonggu Wenxueshe Literacy Workers Club in Chuxiong (Yunnan); West Mountain Literacy School in Kunming (Yunnan); and the Illiteracy Campaign Bureau of Provincial Education Bureau in Shanghai. The first visit involved discussion with adult education officials and seeing the facilities and some classes. The other two visits, however, only involved discussion with adult education officials; in Shangai many of whom had extensive experience in the field. In all three cases, time was a problem - more time was devoted to discussions and less time was spent observing practical learning activities.

Tonggu Wenxueshe Literacy Workers Club

The club was established with Trade Union support and has a substantial four-storey building in the large town of Chuxiong. It caters for working adults who want to improve their skills (eg. in Chinese language and maths). It also has recreational facilities and a 10,000 volume library. Employers encourage their workers to take up evening classes by offering bonuses for skills learnt as they are expected to be more productive in their work. Improvement in skills is a requirement for further promotion for the workers. The financial bonuses and promotion are incentives to their continuing professional and academic improvement. The objective is to assist middle level workers to improve their work skills which would make them more productive and better workers.

When we visited the club we saw exhibitions of art work and photographs, lessons in Chinese and maths and recreational activities (games). The club members normally attend these evening sessions both for study and leisure. The participants are workers of all ages, most of whom have completed their primary schooling and who wish to learn more.

West Mountain District United Department Office.

The centre we visited is situated about 30 km from Kunming City in the land of the Yi Nationality. The population of the area is 17,500 of whom two thirds belong to Minority Nationalities. Half of these are Yi.

We were told that the literacy programme had a total enrolment of 1299 adult learners, with 45 classes in Chinese and seven in Miao. The adult education program aims to reduce illiteracy among the over 40's and raise the general educational level by providing in-service training for adults.

Funding came mostly from the provincial government, with some from district and village governments and the United Department Office itself. This was supported through both government and community sources. The emphasis was on anti-

illiteracy campaigns. The West Mountain District officials believe that all its citizens should be given the opportunity to learn about their surrounding environment and help shape its future direction.

Seventy-five part-time teachers come from middle schools, while 22 are peasants chosen by their communities and approved by the Provincial Education Bureau. All go through a short inservice training course in teaching methods for adults. Functional literacy is a major part of the peasant education program where peasants with no formal education attend evening classes to learn better methods of farming to improve their skills by becoming better literate.

Most classes are held in village schools, with more being held at times of the year when there is less farm work. Special teaching materials for adult learners were produced in the province.

The two main problems discussed were: the effect of a long day's work on the attendance of adult learners during evening classes (being very tired after a hard day in the field); and the learning difficulties of older and slower learners, who need help from a spouse or children to recognize the characters.

Shanghai Literacy Campaign

The area of Shanghai includes the countryside around the city as well as the city itself. In 1949, 80% of the population in the rural areas was illiterate. In 1950, a literacy campaign was started with two-hour classes three times a week for eight months. There were few drop-outs: penalties for dropping out included loss of fertilizer allocation. From 1958, the campaign switched emphasis to functional literacy, building on what people had learnt in the first round. By 1964 the rural illiteracy rate had fallen to 30%; a spot check in 1982 showed 22% illiteracy in rural areas and 11% in urban areas of Shanghai. The organizers aimed to have a popular movement, to encourage everyone to be involved and use pupils or ex-students who could read the newspaper freely as teachers and models. From 1978-82 there was a campaign to

cut the number of people who learned to read and write but then forgot.

Special allowances for literacy teachers and the production of adequate literacy reading materials have been made available by the People's Government.

The campaign has had some notable achievements in its direct influence on the increased production by peasant farmers resulting from their improved farming now that they have been able to exploit their knowledge and skills as literate farmers and the indirect influence on the universalization of primary education. The Chinese realize that the problems of illiteracy and high dropout or non-enrolment rate are two sides to the same coin. The adoption of this integrative approach in the Shanghai education system has shown real improvement in the changes in production. The improvement to 22% rural and 11% urban illiteracy rates has had significant effects on the economy of the province. Being the most industrialized urban city in China, this has an important effect on the overall national economy.

Some General Comments

The experience gained will certainly go a long way. Papua New Guinea, unlike China, has a great deal of catching-up to do in reducing its high rate of illiteracy which stood at 67.6% according to the 1971 census. There may have already been some improvement in the literacy rate, but the 1980 census failed to assess rates of illiteracy in Papua New Guinea. According to a Unesco Special Report, the illiteracy rate in Papua New Guinea has decreased to 54.5% in 1986 (The Nation 1986). If this estimate is close to reality, then it means we have made a slight improvement. Nevertheless, according to this report, we are still in the fourth and last category of countries by rate of illiteracy in the South East Asian Region - more than 50% illiteracy rate.

Though China has improved its literacy rate, particularly in urban areas, the gross figure of 235.8 million illiterates in 1982 is still alarming. One factor that may

have contributed to China's achievements so far is the emphasis on qualifications in employment which have not only encouraged many adults to return to school but indirectly forced the illiterate peasant farmers to improve their knowledge and skills about agricultural methods and techniques in order to increase their farming production to be able to sell more, a portion of what the farmer is entitled to while another part goes to the government. This, on the other hand, is an indication of the change taking place within the Chinese economy - the desire for profit making involvement in business where hard working individuals and groups get most of their profits.

One thing to be learnt from the experience is the society's high level of discipline, which to some extent has come about because of its high level of literate population, where since childhood members are taught to think and act communistically. There has been so much happening outside the formal learning system that are closely integrated into other life activities that adult learning (basic or advanced) is not seen as inferior as the case in Papua New Guinea. Much can be learnt from this experience where learning should be supported at all levels. Papua New Guinea needs to change its attitudes about adult education by supporting functional literacy programs where learning is linked to other developmental efforts which are already components within the established social network. The education of adults, if encouraged, would play an important role in the future development of our nation - an already much talked about concern, but one which still lacks political drive.

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Chapter 8

LANGUAGE USE IN CHINA

Willie E. Jonduo

Introduction

Language is an indispensible subject to peoples of any society, whether they are monolingual, bilingual or multilingual.

Following our brief visit to some of the educational institutes in parts of China, I can only give my impressions on how the languages are used in school, at home and in the general workforce.

The languages used in China can be put into three main categories: 1, the major language (Han or Mandarin); 2, the minority languages; 3, the foreign languages.

The Major Language: Chinese

The majority of the people of China use Chinese in their everyday activities; for example in government, politics, business, science and technology, processes of sociolization, education, public health, in family units, etc.

There are dialectical differences in respective areas - for example, the Chinese of Guangdong and Hong Kong have their own dialect, the people living in and around Shanghai speak a little differently from the people in Beijing while the people of Kunming in Yunnan, speak again with variations different from either Beijing, Shanghai or Guangdong. The style of speech used in official circles in Beijing, known as Mandarin (outside China) or putonghua, has been adopted as a national standard is taught in schools. The written language has a standard orthography throughout the country.

Standardization (of common speech)

The language of the majority, Chinese, has many different dialects throughout China. Therefore a common speech style was sought in the mid 1950s. Selecting a particular dialect amongst many other Chinese dialects is a problem. For example, in 1955 the Northern dialect was declared the common speech; 'Putonghua' and after three years through the simplified Chinese characters came the 'Pinyin' script for communications. 'With 'Putonghua' came sets of simplified characters reducing the number of brush strokes needed to transcribe familiar words' (Cleverly 1985: 120).

A little more discussion on the major language and its use will be focused on in the next category: National Minority language groups.

2. Minority Nationality Language Groups

China has over 50 language groups: the Minority Nationality language groups plus the Han (Chinese) language which is now the common and the major language. Of the only 1,000,000,000 (1 billion) people of China about 68 million of them are in the minority language groups.

Many of the 54 Minority Nationality language groups are found in the South Western Region of China. Apart from Chinese: Yunnan has 24 language groups: Tibetan, Lhoba, Moinba, Yi, Miao, Bouyei, Dong, Bai, Hani, Dai, Lisu, Lahu, Jingpo, Blan, Achang, Pumi, Nu, Jino, Benglong, Drung, Naxi, Shui, Gelo, Qiang.

Cleverley says: 'teaching is usually in the language of the minority with Chinese taught as a second language' (1985:250). We did not find this - in Chuxiong we asked a large 11th year class of 80 Minority Nationality students in Chuxiong Senior Middle School to demonstrate writing in their own languages - not one knew how to even write their name in their own language. In Yunnan only in areas where there are compact communities (Dai, Lisu, Jingpo, Lahu and Wa) are

languages used as the medium of instruction in schools. In other parts of China where there are large populations of one language Mongolian, Korean, Miao, Kazak, Urgur and Tibetan are used in schools.

No comic books in Minority Nationality languages in Yunnan Union club library.

In the Northwest there are: 14

Uygur, Kazah, Kirgiz, Xibe, Tarjik, Ozben, Tartar, russian, Hini, Dongxiang, Yugur, Bonan, Ty, Salar.

In the North-east Central South there are: 9

Shuan, Yao, Tujia, Li, Gaoshan, She, Mulan, Maonan, Jing,

In the North-east there are: 6

Manchu, Korean, Daur, Ewenki, Oroqen, Hizhen.

In the North there is only one: Mongolian.

Bai (1982) Yant, Fang, Gong and Zhu in the Outline History of China.

Many of the minority language groups (if not all) are located near the borders of China and the surrounding neighbouring countries. The 54 Minority Nationalities occupy 60% of the land of China.

What Language Do the Speakers of the Minority Language Groups Use?

In the past decade the Chinese government has invested a lot of resources into promoting and maintaining the smaller language groups as listed above.

According to our informants a priority was given to building schools and colleges for the minority groups and providing free boarding schools and basic learning materials. The children, where minority groups lived together in sufficiently compact communities, were encouraged to use their language. However, the main language, Chinese, is taught to

the children in schools and colleges and to the adults in the evening classes organized by the respective Provincial Education Bureau.

In some places the schooling population of the minority groups (children and adults) learn in their own languages and use their languages as the medium to learn Chinese as a second language. In addition for minorities to understand science and technology one has to know Chinese. For a beginner to be literate to any extent in Chinese, they have to know at least 1500 Chinese characters: this enables them to use a basic dictionary. Reading a newspaper requires about 3000 characters.

Foreign Languages

Since China was opened to the outside world, many Western ideas are welcome in the country. To understand some of these Western concepts some foreign languages have to be learnt. The English language, for example, is learnt in universities, colleges and junior and senior middle schools and through adult education on TV. Special courses are being offered to Chinese abroad in English, French, Japanese and some languages of the neighbouring countries. These foreign languages are learnt and because they are used in times of communication links with the outside world only, the use of languages become stagnant. The Chinese who get constant practices in using the foreign languages become very good at them.

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Chapter 9

LINKING LEARNING WITH THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT IN CHINESE EDUCATION - SOME COMMENTS

David A. Knox

Introduction

In Papua New Guinea I work as the participant evaluator of the Community Schools Agricultural Pilot Project, which aims to improve the teaching of agriculture in community (primary) schools and also improve the teaching of other subjects by linking lessons more closely to the local environment.

None of the schools we visited in China had a school farm, or a factory where the pupils undertook productive work. I was therefore unable to observe directly examples of agriculture teaching or education with production. This report therefore deals more with the features of the Chinese system which would affect the linking of lessons with the environment, rather than direct observations.

Some Aspects of Decision-Taking and Control in the Chinese Educational System.

Overall Policies

The general pattern is that broad policy guidelines are set centrally, particularly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), but decisions on how to implement these policies are left to lower levels. Examples of these central policy guidelines are:

- education should be universal for all children up to the end of Grade 9 (the end of junior middle school);

- education should contribute to the 'Four Modernizations' (of agriculture, industry, science and technology and defence);
- education should help develop moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic abilities and strengthen labour education;
- minority nationalities should be helped to develop and modernize their economies, while also being encouraged to develop their own languages and retain their own cultures.

Implementation of these Policies.

The State Education Commission

This is equivalent to a central Ministry of Education and is based in Beijing. The State Education Commission issues syllabuses and textbooks for general education subjects (eg. Chinese language, mathematics, science) and sets standards for vocational subjects (eg. training of electricians). It also specifies the maximum number of hours which junior middle and senior middle school students can spend on productive work (144 hours and 243 hours total respectively over the three years at each level, with a maximum of four hours per week or two months full-time work in one year) but the distribution of time within these guidelines is decided further down.

Provinces and Districts

Provinces can write their own teaching materials and set examinations (including the important examination at the end of elementary school), or delegate these tasks to districts.

In Kunming we were told that, within the national standards set by the State Education Commission, the vocational instructors at vocational middle schools would plan their own courses and examinations (also to the national standards) were set by the district to fit local requirements.

Provinces can make special provision for minority

nationalities and reserve places at universities eg. Yunnan Province had reserved 500 University places for students graduating from vocational middle schools and applying to study in their own fields of specialisation. Provinces and municipalities could also decide to levy low or no tax on schools' earnings from productive work, to encourage schools to undertake this.

Chuxiong Autonomous District was able to decide, county by county, whether primary education would last for five years or six years (the recent reform extended the first level of schooling to six years).

Features at Local Level

In China, integrated control mechanisms at local level, involving the Communist Party of China, make possible co-ordinated implementation of policies in a way not seen in Papua New Guinea. For example, people are not free to move from one place to another to seek employment without official permission and elected village committees (neighbourhood committees in towns) have great influence: eg. village committees determine the allocation of land and irrigation water to family units. Two examples of local planning within this system mentioned in previous chapters were incentives to participate in literacy classes in the countryside around Shanghai, and contracting between vocational middle schools and future employers for the training of staff.

In a senior middle school one of the teachers given a reduced teaching load was the CPC branch secretary. This person, not the school principal, was the chairman of a policy committee which decided how the school should implement the policy guidelines coming down from above: the principal's role was more administrative in nature, making sure that things worked.

Some of the tertiary institutions mentioned visits by senior outsiders, who checked that the institution was implementing the policy guidelines decided on.

The Teaching Force and Teacher Training

The success of any school or adult education centre will depend mainly on its teachers. China has over six million teachers. In terms of linking learning with the local environment, teachers in China have both advantages and disadvantages compared to their counterparts in Papua New Guinea.

We were told that, like Papua New Guinea, China has a shortage of qualified and experienced personnel. Not all school teachers are trained: for example, at one senior middle school, out of 21 teachers, although 12 had been to university, two had themselves not been educated beyond senior middle school. We were also told that, as in Papua New Guinea, some teachers at junior middle school level did not themselves fully understand the material they were supposed to teach. However, the majority who are trained can specialize during their teacher training. For example, vocational middle school students training to be pre-school teachers, apart from studying a general core of academic subjects (eg. Chinese, mathematics, science, geography), specialize in music, dance and painting. The examples of dance and painting we saw at No. 3 Technical and Vocational Middle School in Kunming were mainly traditional Chinese styles. Primary teachers could also specialize during their teacher training (eg. in Chinese, mathematics, music) so that they should have a better grasp of subject matter and skills within these limited areas than their non-specialized Papua New Guinean counterparts. They may also have a better grasp of general subject matter - it seems that more time in the training of primary school teachers is given to learning content than to teaching methods. Such greater understanding in depth of the subject matter should make it easier for teachers to prepare their own lessons linked to the local environment.

Chinese teachers may get less training in teaching methods than teachers in Papua New Guinea. From what we gathered in the vocational senior middle schools training teachers, there would not be much time for teaching methods

courses after the general subjects and specialist content had been covered. Teaching practice at one (No. 174 Vocational Middle School in Beijing) occupied 1-2 weeks per semester of five months in the first two years, and one month per semester in the third year. Teaching methods were mentioned as a problem almost everywhere we went.

The Chinese educational system contains provision for in-service training. In Chuxiong we were told that every county had an in-service training centre. A row of ten rooms or flatlets at Erliguo Elementary School in Beijing was occupied by teachers from Guangdong attending a mathematics in-service course at the school. Vocational Middle School No. 174 in Beijing, specializing in music and arts, held special vacation workshops where teachers exchanged experiences and ideas. Some kindergarten teachers from rural areas, as well as teachers whose education had finished at Grade 9, after passing an examination could take a two-year course there; this was at present being taken by two classes with a total of 80 students. The middle school itself sent its own teachers (all with college or university training) to a municipal education college for upgrading in their subject areas.

Using teachers who come from outside the educational system should facilitate the linking of lessons with the local environment. As mentioned in earlier chapters, technical instructors in vocational schools often come from outside units and some of the teachers in adult education centres were themselves peasants recommended by their units.

Chinese school teachers have much lighter teaching loads than teachers in many other countries; 12 contact hours per week seemed about average, though we were told this could be higher in remote schools where teachers were in short supply. This should enable them to find out more about the local environment and link their lessons to it, provided that they have sufficient understanding of subject content and are motivated to do so. One head teacher said that not all the teachers in her school were willing to undertake new things, many preferring to stick to the old ways with which they were familiar.

Productive Work by Children During School Time

Until the downfall of the 'Gang of Four ' and subsequent changes starting about 1979 (including the re-introduction of examinations to select students to proceed to middle schools and colleges), every school had a programme to involve the students in some sort of productive work as well as studying their school subjects. The schools where we had scheduled visits did not now have such a programme. We were told that about 25-30% of the primary schools in Yunnan Province had their own farms or factories, and that in both junior and senior middle schools productive work is commoner than in primary schools. Of the 1,825 regular (that is non-vocational) middle schools in Yunnan province, about 550 had their own farms and another 300 or so their own factories, while the great majority of vocational middle schools had their own production facilities.

We were told that the usual practice was for competent factory or farm workers to supervise the children during the productive work, so the teachers themselves did not need to be expert at it.

There seems to be considerable scope for productive work by children for schools which give this sufficient priority. The Chinese market does not seem to be saturated with cheap goods produced by capital-intensive industries, nor were objections from Trades Unions mentioned as a problem. We were told that the biggest problem for schools was in getting access to suitable production facilities. An administrator said that one problem was that not all teachers thought it was important for children to do productive work.

Two of the schools we visited had small factories or workshops on their premises, but all the work was done by paid employees and the purpose of the venture was purely to make money for the school.

Although we were told that, especially in rural and more remote areas, some primary schools gave some vocational

training, and that some junior middle schools are primarily vocational, we did not see any of them. The topics covered would depend on the situation in the district: examples included fruit trees, tobacco, tea and embroidery. We were told that in two counties in Yunnan, primary schools did not offer the usual basic education in the afternoons but instead had their own farms with (eg.) bananas or rubber trees, and the children went there to learn productive skills.

From our own observations, we could not say how many schools were linking their teaching to the local environment through productive work, or in what ways. People talking to us about the officially approved policy of combining education and production gave as its objectives ideas like inculcating a love of labour, learning work skills and work discipline, and increasing understanding of how society works, rather than showing how subject content learned in the classroom was related to the environment.

Other Factors Likely to be Important

1. Timetabling.

Although the specialisation of teachers in most schools means they should have a greater understanding of their subject content, the fact that a class is taken by a different teacher each period reduces the potential flexibility of timetabling enjoyed by a teacher who takes the same class for the whole of the day.

2. Teaching Materials

Being unable to read Chinese, I cannot offer any comments on them. In the classes we saw, every child seemed to have a copy of the relevant textbook.

3. Examinations

The kinds of questions put into examinations and tests are powerful influences on students' learning: questions that can be answered purely from memory tend

to encourage students to memorise, rather than use higher-order thinking skills. I did not have time to go through any test or examination papers to see the sorts of questions being set. Where I asked, I was told that the Grade 6 examination was being set by districts rather than provinces, so that questions could reflect the local situation. However, I wonder if the districts have the expertise to establish item banks of questions testing higher-order thinking skills.

4. Checking-up Visits and Check-lists

No one mentioned school inspectors during our visit, though we were told of infrequent visits by senior administrators, to check that overall guidelines were being followed. Experience in Papua New Guinea suggests that check-lists eg. what a good classroom, laboratory or school garden should have can be very helpful to teachers, as well as outside visitors. I do not know if these were contained in the teaching materials provided to schools.

Some Concluding Remarks

Several features of the Chinese educational system offer considerable scope for linking school learning to the environment, in particular the decentralisation of decision-making on detailed points, the policy guidelines stressing the importance of linking schooling with the world of work, and the capacity for integrated planning and implementation in a locality. The fact that many teachers are more specialized than their Papua New Guinea counterparts means that they should have a better grasp of subject content in their areas of specialization and therefore find it easier to devise their own lessons; however, if they see themselves only as specialists, they may not wish to undertake sequences of lessons around a local topic which cut across subjects to provide meaningful learning closely connected to the local environment.

I think it would be useful for (eg.) Yunnan province and Papua New Guinea to exchange samples of teaching materials and tests, provided translation into Chinese and English can be arranged. The two systems could clearly learn from each other, although direct transfer of practices from one into the other are likely to be difficult because of the very different organizational frameworks used in the different countries.

Chapter 10

PROBLEMS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEAN STUDENTS IN CHINA:
Notes of a Discussion with Dr. Wang Chunbao, Section Chief of Foreign Affairs Department, Beijing Language Institute.

Philip Kerema

Main Points of Discussion:

1. PNG students at the Language Institute

Two PNG students, Vincent Sumale and Tom Aren, are studying at the Language Institute. Both students have settled in after a few months of language and communication problems. We took them to the Great Wall and the Ming Tombs on 25/06/87.

2. Establishing Understanding

Professor Wang, during the discussion, stated that Papua New Guinea has sent its first two students to study at the Language Institute, sponsored by the Chinese Government. He said that:

a. we (PNG and China) need to establish more understanding and learn from each other;

b. we should explore the possibilities of student exchange schemes, and exchange researchers;

c. we should share research information in the field of education.

3. Research Interests

The research interests of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Beijing Language Institute (particularly Professor Wang's interest's) are:

a. generally, education development in small Pacific Island states;

b. specific areas of interests include education and culture; youth and education; and education and economic development. I have promised to send him some information.

4. Our Interests

I have indicated our interests in learning about Chinese education and sharing research information, developing further understanding and even sending a few more students to the Language Institute through the same scheme as Tom and Vincent.

5. PNG students' Problems at the Language Institute

It was noted that:

a. more than 1000 foreign students from 99 different countries are studying in the Language Institute;

b. most students from Western countries come to study the Chinese language;

c. students from developing countries come to study Chinese for one year in order to study other disciplines eg. political economy, agriculture, engineering, in other universities and colleges in China.

The following list of problems were noted:

a. general communication problems - at least for the first few months;

b. cultural differences and misunderstandings;

c. lack of entertainment, which most foreign

students are used to;

d. very strict Chinese customs regarding boy/girl (male/female) relationships;

e. poor living conditions in the student dormitories upset many newcomers but eventually they get used to them;

f. generally, social services are scarce and scattered in Beijing.

6. Suggestion

In the future Papua New Guinea students, before coming to China, must have a few days of introduction to China. Better still would be to organize a brief course in the Chinese language for students to learn basic communication skills before they go to China. One member of the ERU study tour brought back a tape and book course in spoken Chinese which could be useful and Chinese Embassy staff are willing to help.

Photographs

Pages	*Item*
Cover	*The delegation at the entrance to the Erliguo Primary School, Beijing.*
6 top	*On the train from Hong Kong to Guangzhou.*
bottom	*Our main form of transport within cities was on Toyota buses. In Kunming, front row from left to right: Han Yuexin, Zhu Li, and Deng Xiao Long, our hosts.*
11	*At Five Trees Village where we made an unscheduled visit Mrs Be Ling Zhe invited us to inspect her home. Here she stands behind Willy and Pani. She belongs to the Sani sub-tribe of the Li Nationality.*
12 top	*Life-size arhats of Buddhas and Monks reaching Nirvana at the Bamboo Temple in the West Mountains of Kunming.*
bottom	*Cui Jui Ping and Ephraim Apelis strike an imperial pose on the Spirit Way seven km from the Ming Tombs, Shisanling. These are 15th Century Ming Sculptures.*
22 top	*Professor Lu Chun and Mrs Zuo Mang Lan of the Yunnan Institute for Educational Research at their office at the Yunnan Normal University. Tom Seta of the Research and Evaluation Unit, National Department of Education, Papua New Guinea, in the middle.*
bottom	*The educational researchers from Papua New Guinea meet with the staff of the National Institute for Educational Research In Beijing.*
37	*At the Five Trees Primary School Ephraim Apelis takes a class during their recess!*

38 top — *Observing a Chinese language class at the Erliguo Primary School in Beijing.*

bottom — *The Principal of the Big Fish Primary School, Kunming, joins Ephraim Apelis and some of his students in a demonstration of 'OK' movement.*

50 top — *Pre-school Teacher Trainees at the Kunming No. 3 Technical and Vocational School perform a fan dance for the delegation from Papua New Guinea.*

bottom — *Ephraim Apelis learning from a Fine Arts student at the Hua Shan Fine Arts Vocational Middle School.*

55 — *The main teaching block at the Chuxiong Senior Middle School for Minority Nationalities.*

56 — *Official portraits with staff of the NIER. Top picture infront of the NIER office building in Beijing. Bottom picture following the banquet at the Bamboo Restaurant, Wangfujing Dajie.*

75 — *A night view of Shanghai from the 17th floor of Shanghai Mansions: fron left to right – Willie Jonduo, John Khambu, David Knox, Ephraim Apelis, Tom Seta, Philip Kerema, Jane Sunderland and Pani Tawaiyole.*

76 top — *Enjoying Chinese food: our first banquet in Guangzhou.*

bottom — *Lunch at the Ming Tombs, including Tom Aren third from the left and Vincent Sumale, sixth from the left.*

79 — *A view of endless bicycles and buses during evening rush hour on Wangfujing Dajie Street in Beijing.*

Back Cover — *Ephraim Apelis with a Wantok in the Imperial Gardens within the Forbidden City in Beijing.*